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DGRIT

DGRIT recommends VM Explorer to clients. The consultancy uses VM Explorer at international film business and smaller firms.

Overview

IT consultant Dirk Gruedl, from DGRIT in Germany, helps a wide range of clients administer virtualized computing environments. The organizations he supports include a digital film business with more than 10 TB of data to protect, as well as smaller companies with a few virtual machines using freeware hypervisors. He recommends VM Explorer due to its affordability, usability, and reliability.

Challenge

Growth in Virtual Machines

Virtualization is a powerful way for organizations to gain greater value from their investments in server hardware. By using software such as VMware vSphere and Microsoft

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>
> **DIRK GRUEDL**
> Director
> DGRIT

Hyper-V, they can run multiple operating systems and applications on single physical servers to use more of their computing and storage capacity.

However, organizations need new advanced tools for backing up and recovering file-system data, applications, and entire servers containing multiple virtual machines (VMs). While tools are available, they are often too expensive and complex for smaller business users.

DGRIT needed a practical VM backup solution for clients running a few virtual machines on a single server, through to one of its largest clients, Digital Film Technology GmbH (DFT). DFT runs about 45 VMs on seven physical servers, which host almost 10 TB in applications and data to power its core business and accounting systems. DFT also has research and development teams that need copies of virtualized Linux servers to be created as safe environments in which to run software tests.

"Our servers are critical to our ability to run our business and support our more than 25 staff at home here in Germany and at our offices in India, the United Kingdom, and the United States," says Aaron Taylor, Managing Director, DFT.

At a Glance

- **Industry**
  Business Services

- **Location**
  Germany

- **Challenge**
  Provide reliable, cost-effective, and easy-to-administer backup solution for clients running virtual machines.

- **Products and Services**
  VM Explorer

- **Success Highlights**
  + Provides reliable backups and rapid restores
  + Features a simple, low-cost licensing model
  + Minimizes training requirements

Solution

DGRIT regularly implements OpenText™ VM Explorer to meet its clients' VM backup and recovery requirements. For DFT in particular, it has implemented VM Explorer Pro to manage the backup for the company's 45 VMs.

DFT is planning to upgrade to VM Explorer Enterprise Edition in order to also use the product to manage backups to tape storage. This will enable the business to retire Commvault Simpana, which it currently uses for the task.

Moving from VM Explorer Pro to Enterprise will give DFT a multi-user interface and Active Directory integration, the ability to manage virtual storage area networks, and encrypted (256-bit AES encryption) backups. The company will continue to benefit from VM Explorer's fast and stable web client, which makes it simple to control VM backups from remote locations.

Results

Reliability and Performance

VM Explorer has proven to be highly reliable and effective for DGRIT and the clients that it supports.

"It works perfectly—I haven't had any technical problems with it," says Gruedl.

Taylor adds that DFT has not experienced any significant server downtime since implementing VM Explorer two years ago.

"In theory, virtualized servers provide a wide range of advantages, especially in respect to reliability and reduced costs," says Taylor. "It might seem risky at first because it's so abstract, but we've been very satisfied with the stability and total cost of ownership of our IT environment since moving to our new solution."

Fast Backup and Recovery

According to Gruedl, VM Explorer works quickly because it backs up—or replicates—entire virtual environments in a fast and efficient manner. This is rather than extracting, processing, and backing up data from within servers like traditional backup software.

"VM Explorer has to be faster because there is no processing of the data; there's no structuring of the data. It's hard to compare with another solution," he says.

DGRIT has had to put VM Explorer's performance to the test a number of times and found it can restore entire VMs within minutes. Gruedl has also found he can seamlessly back up virtual machines while they are running in order to create duplicates for DFT's research and development teams to use in testing.

Easy to Learn and Use

Gruedl adds that VM Explorer is straightforward to implement and easy to use. "It's really fast to administer and it's easy to use. It is very well structured. It has no complex or overloaded menus."

The simplicity of VM Explorer also means Gruedl did not need to complete any specialized training to use the product or be a backup expert. "I do not want to have one week of training to handle a simple backup," he says. "It was not necessary. If you are able to handle a VMware system, you can fix any problem that appears."

According to Gruedl, the problems that arise in backing up virtualized servers typically don't relate to VM Explorer itself. "VM Explorer has no problems. The problems are usually on the VMware side or somewhere else," he says.

Affordable and Supports VMware ESX/ESXI

One of the key reasons Gruedl recommends VM Explorer is its simple and cost-effective licensing model. "The pricing was very attractive," he comments. "It's an easy licensing model. It's perfect."

He stresses that VM Explorer is a unique option for smaller businesses using VMware's ESXi free hypervisor to virtualize their servers.

"A great benefit of VM Explorer is that it backs up the free versions of VMware," says Gruedl. "If you have a small business with one server and five virtual machines, VM Explorer is a great backup product. It's the only backup product working this way."

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